

Directions for Major Assignment #1: Resume & Cover Letter ENC 3241

This assignment asks you to create a resume and job application letter (cover letter) for a professional position in an industry of your choosing. This assignment is both practical and challenges you to think about your audience. These documents will be your first impression for potential employers, so it is important that you produce your best work for this assignment. You can also use this assignment to apply for an actual job or internship (see possible websites below), though you should make sure to conform to my standards here for what you turn in to me. Even if you choose to not use this assignment to apply for an actual job, you should find a job that you believe you are qualified for (or one you will be qualified for shortly).

Writing Goal: To obtain an interview

Submission Details: You will submit three documents for this assignment. These should be submitted via the Assignments tool in Webcourses as attachments in pdf, doc, or docx format:

- A pdf or screenshot of the current job ad toward which your letter is directed. You should include all of the job ad and the qualifications.
- A cover letter, addressed to the prospective employer (see below for more details)
- A resume (see below for more details)
- You should be able to submit multiple attachments, but you should double-check to make sure everything has been uploaded correctly.

The resume: should follow the guidelines in your book. For a good model, please use the chronological resume of Lawrence Morgan on p. 318. Alternatively, this has been refashioned to serve as a sound model of a functional resume on p. 321. If you have an old resume that you want to use for this assignment, change it to conform to the book for this assignment. Just because you have a resume that has worked for you before, this does not mean that it cannot be improved.

- Make sure that you only include significant information (don't "pad" your resume).
- Your resume should be one page (front and back).
- Use the organization from the textbook (education first, reverse chronological order, etc.)
- Don't use fancy fonts and unusual formatting. 11-12 pt. Sans Serif fonts like Arial are accessible, but you can also use Calibri or Times New Roman. You can use variations (bolded, underlined, etc.) for headings.
- Write "Available upon request" in this References section.
- When you describe your work experience:
 - Start with an active verb. Use present tense for your current job; past tense for previous jobs.
 - Use parallel sentences; start with an active verb for each description.
 - Keep your descriptions short and to the point.
- If you do not have any job experience that relates to your field, think about how your previous experience (paid or volunteer) might be relevant to the job for which you are applying. Then mention the relevance in the cover letter (e.g., "My volunteer job stocking shelves at the food bank helped me practice organizational skills and develop strategies for interacting with other volunteers.").
- You may include a list of **relevant** coursework if appropriate.
- Make sure you put the date, the month, and the year of the time you produced or updated your resume at the bottom.
- ***You do not have to give me your contact information and address for this assignment. Get creative and make something up.***

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The cover letter: should be addressed to the prospective employer and follow the guidelines from your textbook.

What I am looking for in this letter is that you can write in the form described in our text and this module. I am looking to see that you explicitly address the job ad and tell the reader how you can fulfill the role. A great way to do this is to ***use the language of the job ad***. If they say that they want someone who is “flexible and can work interdependently,” you can use those exact phrases in your cover letter.

It is important that you present yourself in a positive light and show that you are honest about your qualifications, but you should also be careful not to sound like you are bragging. You also do not want to highlight the fact that you may have less job experience. They can see that; use that space to talk about projects or other things that you have done to show that you are qualified.

Include these things:

- Your address and the date you write the letter.
- The address of the company and, if possible, name of the contact person.
- An opening salutation. “Dear ____:” If you can, direct your resume and job application letter to the specific person in charge of hiring for that position. I suggest their full name or a [gender-neutral title](#). Traditional advice is that if you are writing to a woman, use “Ms.” unless the job description specifically states “Dr.,” “Mrs.,” “Miss.,” or something else, but it’s generally best practice to not assume. If there is not a specific person identified as the contact person, write “Dear Hiring Committee:”
- An opening paragraph that explains the particular position to which you are applying.
- Several body paragraphs, each with a strong topic sentence and existing as separate entities relative to other paragraphs. Your body paragraphs should address what the job ad lists. In general, I suggest re-wording their language exactly; this shows them that you are interested in the job enough to have read the ad thoroughly. So, if the ad says that they want someone who is a “strategic thinker,” say something like “I am a strategic thinker.”
- Then, give examples of how you meet these qualifications. When have you demonstrated “strategic thinking”? Be concrete, not abstract. Talk about specific projects and skills and align them with the job ad.
- A sentence or sentences following these paragraphs that say something that suggests that you want to learn more about the position and how you might be able to help the organization that you are applying to.
- A closing sign-off section: “Sincerely, ____”

The most important part of this assignment is that you work hard to show that you are qualified for the job you have found. While you can use examples from the textbook, do not copy and paste sentences or phrasings from our text or other sources.

Other Specifications:

- Each of these documents should be formatted appropriately for a workplace situation. For example, *do not* double-space, and *do* use the appropriate header information for each document type (resume and letter). I want you to create your own header rather than using a preexisting template in Word.
- You may not create a cover letter for a job you already have. The job ad you select should be for a position you have a reasonable chance of being hired for, or one you’ll be qualified for in the near future (i.e., *not* the new CEO of Facebook).

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Grades:

Criteria	Ratings					Pts
Match Between Materials That your cover letter and resume effectively target your chosen job ad. Do you make effectively make the argument that you could fulfill the role outlined in the ad?	2.4 to >1.8 pts Full Marks	1.8 to >1.2 pts Meets most expectations	1.2 to >0.6 pts Fair Meets some of the assignment requirements	0.6 to >0.0 pts Meets few expectations	0 pts No Marks	2.4 pts
Resume Organization That your resume is effectively organized as the examples in the book (chronological or functional)	2.4 to >1.8 pts Full Marks	1.8 to >1.2 pts Meets most expectations	1.2 to >0.6 pts Fair Meets some of the assignment requirements	0.6 to >0.0 pts Meets few expectations	0 pts No Marks	2.4 pts
Resume Formatting That your resume is formatted according to the conventions outlined in the book and above (e.g. use active verbs and parallel sentences, etc.)	2.4 to >1.8 pts Full Marks	1.8 to >1.2 pts Meets most expectations	1.2 to >0.6 pts Fair Meets some of the assignment requirements	0.6 to >0.0 pts Meets few expectations	0 pts No Marks	2.4 pts
Cover Letter Content and Organization That your cover letter follows the guidelines in the textbook and above. You should present yourself in a positive light, but you should not over-sell yourself either. Be concrete, use topic sentences, and end by requesting an interview.	2.4 to >1.8 pts Full Marks	1.8 to >1.2 pts Meets most expectations	1.2 to >0.6 pts Fair Meets some of the assignment requirements	0.6 to >0.0 pts Meets few expectations	0 pts No Marks	2.4 pts

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Criteria	Ratings					Pts
Mechanics That you use grammar appropriate for the rhetorical situation (in this case, "professional" English appropriate for the job to which you are applying)	2.4 to >1.8 pts Full Marks	1.8 to >1.2 pts Meets most expectations	1.2 to >0.6 pts Fair Meets some of the assignment requirements	0.6 to >0.0 pts Meets few expectations	0 pts No Marks	2.4 pts
Total Points: 12						

Resources:

PDF: This [website](#) will show you how to print to a PDF from your computer.

Gender-Neutral Titles: You can find some great examples of [gender-neutral titles here](#) and [here](#).

Job Boards:

- Indeed.com
- Monster.com
- ziprecruiter.com
- LinkedIn.com
- Glassdoor.com
- Careerbuilder.com/
- SimplyHired.com
- Job.com
- Individual Company Websites
- [UCF's Internship Site](#)
- Other internships that you find online

Other Resources:

- Check out these [statistics from the Pew Research Center](#) on income inequality in the United States in 2020.
- Then, you can go to [O-NetOnline](#) to find out how much you can expect to make at your job. Type in your job, major, etc. in the search bar in the upper-right hand tool bar and then click on the job that is most like the one that you would like. You can also scroll down to the bottom of the page and see what the average salary across the country is and then see what the average salary is in each individual state.
- For those of you unsure of your career path, or for those of you who want to get ahead, [LifeKit: How to Get a Job After College](#) has some great tips and tricks to figure out what you like doing, how to create a resume, and then how to sell yourself to potential employers. Check out their other episodes for other life hacks.